# MINUTES
# SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STUART CITY COMMISSION – 2026 MAYOR GOALS
**JANUARY 13, 2026**
**AT 1:00 PM**
**COMMISSION CHAMBERS**
**121 SW FLAGLER AVE.**
**STUART, FLORIDA 34994**

## CITY COMMISSION

**Mayor Christopher Collins**
**Vice Mayor Sean Reed**
**Commissioner Eula R. Clarke**
**Commissioner Laura Giobbi**
**Commissioner Campbell Rich**

## ADMINISTRATIVE

**Interim City Manager, Louis J. Boglioli III**
**City Attorney, Lee J. Baggett**
**City Clerk, Mary R. Kindel**

## ROLL CALL

1:00 PM

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

N/A

## COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (Non-Agenda Related) (3 Minutes Max.)

1. Caryn Hall - Stuart; Thanked the Mayor for putting this together and spoke about the Commission Meeting on 01/12/2026 and previous commissioners.
2. William Rudge - Stuart; Thanked the Mayor for doing this and stated that perhaps these meetings could be done at a later time so people who are at work can attend the meeting. Also asked for a status update on the accountability of things he has previously asked for.
3. Frank McChrystal - Stuart; Spoke about the training burn center that the Fire Department will be using at the airport location.

## DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

1. 2026 MAYOR'S GOALS; INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS BETWEEN THE MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS TO DISCUSS PRIORITIES AND GOALS.

1:00 – 2:00 PM MAYOR COLLINS AND COMMISSIONER GIOBBI
2:00 – 3:00 PM MAYOR COLLINS AND COMMISSIONER CLARKE
3:00 – 4:00 PM MAYOR COLLINS AND COMMISSIONER RICH
4:00 – 5:00 PM MAYOR COLLINS AND VICE-MAYOR REED

**Commissioner Giobbi Items**

Thanked the Mayor for convening the meeting and for encouraging public engagement.

- Discussed the use of the Half-Cent Sales Tax, recommending:

- Identifying and acquiring properties to preserve green space for residents.
- Designating and protecting historic properties.
- Limiting development impacts on designated historic sites.

- Addressed traffic study requirements, recommending:

- Traffic studies be conducted within a defined timeframe relative to the application.
- Avoiding reliance on studies that are several years old.
- Conducting studies during peak traffic hours, peak seasonal months, and while schools are in session.
- Requiring updated traffic studies when projects experience significant delays prior to construction.

- Suggested the City reevaluate impact fees, noting:

- Current impact fees may be outdated.
- Construction often occurs years after application submission.
- Mayor Collins inquired about review timing, and City Attorney Baggett indicated impact fees are typically reviewed every three to five years, with staff to confirm.

- Expressed concern regarding homeless women and children within the local community, including:

- Interest in exploring ways to assist local populations.
- Referenced potential Salvation Army projects providing housing and supportive services.
- Suggested possible City or CRA support, including financial assistance.
- Mayor Collins noted that state funding or bond opportunities could be explored.

- Requested Commission notification of Live Local Act development applications, particularly those involving 40% affordable housing:

- City Attorney Baggett explained applications are processed administratively through development orders and land use restriction agreements.
- Emphasized the importance of Commission awareness.
- Requested consideration of a tracking or monitoring mechanism similar to that used by the County.

- Emphasized the importance of continued public engagement, including:

- Educating residents on City operations and staff roles.
- Increasing transparency regarding how City services are provided and funded.

- Discussed Boat Show road closures and traffic concerns, noting:

- Reports of blocked access for residents.
- Requested coordination with the Police Department for increased presence during peak commute hours.
- Suggested reviewing traffic management improvements for future events.

**Mayor Collins Goals**

**Referendum Items / Land Preservation**

- Discussed the potential for placing the two-acre parcel north of the bridge into permanent conservation.
- City Attorney Baggett explained the need to amend the existing Interlocal Agreement with the County, which originally contemplated commercial development to help fund conservation.
- Noted that:

- No acceptable commercial proposals have been approved in over 10 years.
- The City has successfully funded conservation maintenance through general funds.

- Proposed combining the two-acre parcel with the larger conservation area.
- Noted strong neighborhood opposition to prior apartment development concepts.
- Identified a referendum as a long-term protection mechanism.

**Sailfish Ballfields Preservation**

- Expressed concern about future development pressure on Sailfish Ballfields, particularly related to potential Brightline impacts.
- Suggested requiring a voter referendum before any redevelopment of the site.
- Discussed exploring historic designation for all or part of the property as an additional protection.
- Stated that a referendum provides the strongest safeguard against future redevelopment.

City attorney clarified that while the Commission approves referendum language and explanatory text, the City may not advocate, lobby, or advertise for or against a referendum.

**Brightline / Courthouse Parking**

- Raised concerns regarding parking impacts associated with Brightline, including courthouse parking needs.
- Requested a proactive, comprehensive review of the parcel and parking implications before any approvals occur.
- Emphasized the importance of preparation rather than reactive decision-making.

**Willoughby Boulevard Extension**

- Discussed the Willoughby Boulevard extension project.

Commissioner Giobbi and Mayor Collins expressed support for pursuing a "no-build" letter to FDOT and noted changes in FDOT staffing and the need to reestablish communication.

**Pond Management / Spraying Alternatives**

- Referenced a prior pilot program at the Poppleton Creek Pond evaluating alternatives to chemical spraying.
- Discussed results involving mechanical removal, interplanting, and other methods.
- Requested revisiting prior recommendations and exploring updated non-spray management options.
- Commissioner Giobbi and Mayor Collins expressed interest in reviewing new approaches and data.

**Staff Rate Increases / COLA Transparency**

- Raised concerns regarding across-the-board cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for staff.
- Noted significant increases in recent years (7% and 10%).
- Mayor Collins requested transparency with a presentation to the commission and a clear rationale tied to the increases. Would like the Commission to approve increases rather than leaving it to the City Manager's discretion.
  Commissioner Giobbi agreed and stated personal opposition to accepting her own raise during budget cuts this past budget cycle.

**Backyard Hens**

- Discussed allowing backyard hens under limited conditions.

- Commissioner Giobbi supports with limitations on the number of hens, setbacks from property lines, and no roosters.

**Half-Cent Sales Tax Priorities**

- Emphasized use of funds consistent with Florida Statutes, including:

- Land acquisition for conservation, recreation, and parks.
- Environmental and water quality-related projects.

Mayor Collins suggested Ruth do a presentation on statutory limitations and permissible uses

Commissioner Giobbi supported prioritizing green space and pocket parks.

Baker Creek / Haney Creek Trailhead

- Expressed interest in creating a passive trailhead and boardwalk system.
- Referenced prior conceptual planning for a natural trail with minimal maintenance.
- Emphasized family accessibility and recreation opportunities.

Commissioner Giobbi supported this idea.

**Future City Hall and Current City Hall Site**

- Discussed long-term vision for the Wells Fargo site.
- Expressed opposition to apartment development.
- Preservation and expansion of green space.
- Integration with Memorial Park.
- Surface parking improvements and beautification.
- Noted that designating the current City Hall site as a park would prevent future residential development.
- Emphasized less intensive development and aesthetic improvements.

***** RECESS 1:58 PM *****
***** RECONVENED 2:01 PM *****

Mayor Collins and Commissioner Clarke

**Referendum Items**

- Discussed the two acres north of the bridge and interest in placing the property into conservation.

- Commissioner Clarke stated she would support conservation and referenced prior discussion regarding trail access and parking considerations.

- Discussed Sailfish Ballfields, noting concerns that potential Brightline development pressure could lead to transit-oriented development.

Mayor Collins stated that any redevelopment should require voter approval via referendum. Commissioner Clarke expressed support for the concept but stated she would want to review the referendum language and hear public input before proceeding.

**Parking / Brightline**

- Discussed the courthouse parking parcel and whether the City should proactively evaluate parking impacts related to Brightline rather than avoid parking requirements.

Commissioner Clarke stated she believes parking is currently adequate but agreed to continued discussion regarding parking impacts, including the potential need for a parking garage in the future.

**Willoughby Boulevard Extension**

- Discussed the Willoughby Boulevard Extension, including its history in transportation planning and the need to carefully review potential impacts.

**Spraying and Pond Management**

- Discussed prior pond management pilot programs aimed at reducing chemical spraying.
- Commissioner Clarke expressed support for reviewing Joe Gulio's recommendations and evaluating associated costs and next steps.

**Staff Rate Increases / COLA**

- Discussed non-union staff COLA and rate increases, which are currently set at the discretion of the City Manager.

- Mayor Collins suggested greater transparency, including a Commission presentation explaining the rationale for proposed increases.
- Commissioner Clarke stated that City Management should retain discretion but would consider the proposal.

**Backyard Hens**

- Discussed backyard hens, noting prior references in the urban code.
- Mayor Collins stated interest in considering backyard hens with limitations.
- Commissioner Clarke stated she is open to public discussion on the issue.

**Half-Cent Sales Tax**

- Discussed using a portion of Half-Cent Sales Tax funds to establish trailheads and light infrastructure.
- Commissioner Clarke stated she would be open to discussing appropriate uses consistent with statute.

**Green Space / Pocket Parks**

- Discussed acquiring properties to create pocket parks and additional green space throughout the City.

**Future and Current City Hall Sites**

- Discussed the future and current City Hall sites, including preserving green space as an extension of Memorial Park.
- Commissioner Clarke stated she would like portions of the site to be income-producing, while maintaining significant green space.
- Mayor Collins stated that Candace will provide a future presentation on site planning options.

***** RECESS 3:00 PM *****
***** RECONVENED 3:11 PM *****

Mayor Collins announced that a meeting scheduled for 3:00 p.m. with Commissioner Rich will not occur due to Commissioner Rich's absence.

***** RECESS 3:12 PM *****
***** RECONVENED 4:00 PM *****

Vice Mayor Reed and Mayor Collins

**Open Government / Transparency**

- Vice Mayor Reed stated his priority is open government and transparency, including:

- Posting emails on the City website.
- Expanding online public access to information (including improving the website and searchability).
- Making code enforcement information more accessible online (similar to the County).

- Vice Mayor Reed stated that magistrate fines and hearings should be clearly public-facing, and the Commission should be aware of outcomes.

- Deputy Clerk Susej Meleqi noted magistrate hearings are public and livestreamed, and recordings are available via the City's YouTube page; Vice Mayor Reed supported having hearings more clearly published/saved in a way that is easier for the public to access.

- Vice Mayor Reed expressed concerns that some City matters are being dragged on too long, and suggested certain longstanding issues may require review by:

- An internal individual/department, or an outside firm.
- He referenced "Stancavich" as an example of a matter needing review.

**Parking / Downtown Character**

- Vice Mayor Reed stated he is not in favor of a parking garage, noting it would change the character and dynamics of Stuart.
- Discussion included the need to evaluate parking impacts holistically, especially as it relates to future projects/events.

**Support for Mayor's Goals**

- Vice Mayor Reed stated he supports the Mayor's goals, including the following topic areas:

- **Referendum Items**
- **Two acres north of the bridge:** interest in placing into conservation.
- **Sailfish Ballfields:** concern Brightline could increase development pressure; support for referendum if redevelopment is proposed.
- **Courthouse/Brightline Parking:** support for reviewing impacts.
- **Willoughby Extension:** discussion included support for a no-build approach.
- **Spraying and Pond Management:** support for exploring alternatives and reviewing cost.
- **Staff Rate Increases / COLA:** support for increased transparency and discussion.
- **Backyard Hens:** open to discussion and regulation.
- **Half-Cent Sales Tax:** support for allowable uses.
- **Land Acquisition:** interest in acquiring property to create pocket parks and green space.

**Current & Future City Hall Site**

Vice Mayor Reed stated:
- **No parking garage** should be pursued at either the current or future City Hall-related

sites.
- **Current City Hall site:** interest in a commercial extension, maintaining parking, and maximizing green space.
- **Future City Hall (Wells Fargo) site:** open to commercial use, but not supportive of mixed-use development and emphasized maintaining adequate parking and green space.

**Public Safety / 911 Calls / Fees**

- Discussion included 911 call volume and dispatch costs, and whether there are fee mechanisms for repeated calls.
- City Attorney noted the City's code includes a structure where three false alarms may trigger fees and enforcement mechanisms through code enforcement.

**Chickens / Neighborhood Identification**

- Vice Mayor Reed referenced prior discussions on backyard hens, designations, and the need for clarity/consistency and public-facing information.

- Discussion included the concept of neighborhood identification (signage/pride/visibility of neighborhoods).

**CRA Discussion**

- Discussion included reviewing potential CRA expansion and broader conversation about CRA impacts on tax base and development.

- Vice Mayor Reed stated he is not opposed to discussing the CRA broadly, including the concept of whether a CRA remains the best tool long-term, while also acknowledging the role additionally in addressing blight and affordability.

**Baker Road / Haney Creek Trail**

- Vice Mayor Reed expressed support for the Baker Road / Haney Creek trailhead concept, with potential alignment to allowable half-cent sales tax uses.

**Traffic Studies**

- Vice Mayor Reed commented that he has never seen a traffic study "fail" and questioned the practical impact of traffic study ratings, asking why they are required if they do not affect approvals.

**Impact Fees**

- Vice Mayor Reed stated developers typically pass impact fees to consumers and that higher fees could increase unpermitted work.

- Mayor Collins asked City Attorney Baggett/Lee to evaluate whether impact fees can be revisited before the standard review cycle.

**Homelessness / Salvation Army**

- Discussion referenced Commissioner Giobbi's earlier comments and the Salvation Army.
- Mayor Collins noted the City cannot "pick and choose" selectively and acknowledged the complexity of funding and policy consistency.

**Boat Show**

- Vice Mayor Reed stated the Boat Show should remain, while acknowledging traffic concerns during the event period.

**Development Department / Process Improvements**

- Vice Mayor Reed compared City and County development review processes and suggested the City process could be improved by:

- Providing consolidated department comments earlier (rather than repeated back-and-forth)
- Establishing clearer deadlines/timelines for certain application types (e.g., administrative variances).

- Vice Mayor Reed stated he has spoken with the Development Director; Mayor Collins encouraged further detailed discussion with her.
- Discussion included that Municode review and updates could help address process clarity; development staff reportedly have internal notes on needed revisions.
- Brief discussion included form-based code context.

Vice Mayor Reed Town Hall

- Vice Mayor Reed announced a Town Hall Meeting the following day to review local government topics including:

- agenda packets/agendas
- website navigation
- Municode
- form-based code
- ways for residents to get involved

**Public Engagement Clarification**

- Vice Mayor Reed requested clarification regarding Commissioner Giobbi's comments on engaging the public.

- Mayor Collins stated his understanding was that she was interested in increasing public familiarity with City operations and staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. John Hatch - President of the Fire Union, spoke regarding exploring funding strategies for training facilities, including potential use of CRA funds (within restrictions) and other funding opportunities.
2. Caryn Hall - Stuart; requested information on Stuart Main Street funding and benefits.

- Mayor Collins explained the City's partnership and services provided (Rockin' Riverwalk, Flagler Center operations/rentals, Green Market), and noted Main Street's operations rely in part on donations and outside support.

- Vice Mayor Reed stated outsourcing is often more efficient than adding City staff and expressed interest in bringing back community events like Dancing in the Streets. Both suggested staff provide updated information on programming and the partnership.

- Discussion included a suggestion about relocating a train crossing nearer a signalized intersection by Alice Street (conceptual discussion).

- Discussion included CRA-related streetscape concerns; Vice Mayor Reed stated that narrowing roads does not necessarily slow traffic and may increase aggressive driving behavior.

**Budget Workshop / Financial Transparency**

- Vice Mayor Reed stated he would like improvements to budget workshop process and transparency, including:

- Department heads presenting their budgets and in an earlier timeframe (not only the City Manager/Finance).
- Listing full-time employee counts by department in budget documents.
- Greater transparency regarding costs/benefits such as take-home vehicles and other expenses.

**ADJOURNMENT**

4:58 PM

**Mary R. Kindel, City Clerk**

**Christopher Collins, Mayor**

**Minutes to be approved at the Regular Commission Meeting this 26th day of January, 2026.**